

Nutwood Newsletter



Number 79 - Summer 2011

2011 Annual Meeting

Saturday 27th August in Warwick

We will take this last opportunity to remind you of the AGM and Annual Meeting, which will take place on Saturday 27th August at Warwick. The Committee always enjoy meeting those members who attend and look forward to seeing you there. If you have never been before do come along for a very special Rupert experience.

We can promise you a full and interesting programme, and we are delighted that Mary Cadogan will be giving us a talk on Rupert's Flights of Fancy. Other planned items are hopefully a Rupert Antiques Roadshow where we plan to show and value some unusual and interesting items. So if you have anything unusual and are coming along then bring your treasure with you to share with the others attending.

There will also be our special Rupert Annual signing by Stuart Trotter who has again kindly agreed to come along and be with us. Make sure you order your Annuals on the Registration Form as only ones purchased from us can be signed on the day. Stuart has been a regular attendee at our Annual Meetings

and has also kindly donated a Rupert picture for our raffle. There are plenty of other unique raffle prizes including an exclusive Terry Webster Rupert statuette so make sure you buy plenty of tickets.

Another new Rupert play will take place in the Theatre and the usual Dealer Bourse with a number of new dealers will be open from 9.00 am where you should be able to fill any gaps in your Rupert collection and also add new items. As well as the old and scarce being available there will be a range of current new Rupert merchandise available from Nick of the Rupert Bear Shop. For Junior Club members there will be the usual painting competition as well as face painting. During the day there will be displays of Magic by a protégé of the Chinese Conjuror and Punch and Judy shows which will also appeal to the more senior members attending.

Another feature we hope to include is demonstrations of 3D card making by Create and Craft. These cards when made up feature Rupert Annual covers and are an enjoyable way of creating unique and special greetings for family and friends.

So loads of reasons for filling in the enclosed form and coming along, and maybe you will even be tempted to make a week-end of it as the festivities start on Friday evening with an evening meal, and if you stay over then you are on site early so you do not miss anything except the Bank Holiday traffic. There are still places available for our traditional evening meal on Saturday, something that has now become an event in itself, with amusements during the evening and the special "Rupert" menus, place mats and coasters that are yours to keep if you attend.

The Rupert model is available only to attending members and numbers are limited to 100

Don't forget to order your Rupert Annuals for signing and a Rupert model as these are limited to 100 only and are rather exclusive.

2011 Followers' AGM – official notification

This is formal notification that the 2011 AGM will take place in Warwick at 12 noon on Saturday 27th August. It is proposed that Tony Griffin be confirmed as Membership Secretary and Sales Officer, and all other existing committee members are prepared to stand. There are no changes to rules or subscriptions proposed. Any other proposals must be with the Secretary at least 30 days before the meeting.

John Beck (Secretary)



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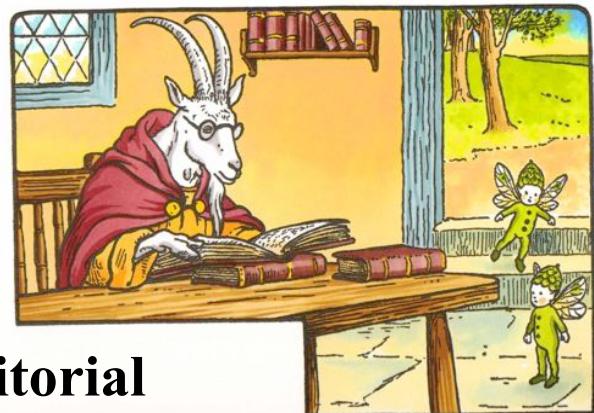


A Message from the Chairman

Hello again everyone, and yes, the AGM is again just around the corner.

This time last year I had to alert you all to the fact that in the light of financial problems, particularly ever-increasing postal charges, we needed to raise the subs and reduce the number of Newsletters from 4 to 3 a year, although increasing their size.

I remain grateful that the membership has been so supportive of these measures, and am pleased to say that the action taken has largely done the trick. This has been helped greatly by a number of measures which Tony Griffin has taken since he took over as Membership Secretary. In the light of all of this we won't be asking for



Editorial

It hardly seems possible that the time has come round again for another Annual Meeting, which as this is being written, is only eight weeks away. We still have a few members who attended the first one in 1984, twenty-seven years ago, and had Alfred Bestall as a guest. At this time the Followers only had about 100 members so attendance was probably a few dozen, but Tony Shuker reported in Nutwood No 4 “the weekend was a great success and is destined to become an annual event”.

How right he was and all subsequent meetings have been memorable for a variety of reasons as well. Not only are Annual Meetings still flourishing with attendances now in the hundreds but also the venue has gone from a hotel in Nottingham to a School and Theatre in Warwick. Also thanks to the tireless efforts of Tony Griffin and his team there are always new delights to greet the regular attendees and plenty to impress anyone attending for the first time. So, if you have never been before, make this the year you do, and if you are one of the regulars you know you are in for a good time. We can assure you that the Committee look forward to meeting you all.

The Wise Old Goat

any difficult decisions to be taken at this year's AGM, so thanks to all of you for your help in us getting through this period.

So, onto the rest of the AGM week-end. First of all of course, if you haven't booked yet please do so as soon as you can; if you've never been before, please do consider making your debut - we'd love to see you. Apart from the general camaraderie and the tempting wares on display at the dealers' stores, you'll have the chances to meet those Followers stalwarts, Mary Cadogan and Stuart Trotter. I'm sure also that one of the most popular events this year will be the return of the Rupert Roadshow, so if you have any interesting goodies, please bring them along to share with us.

We also have the return of the popular Rupert play with your chance to have your photograph taken with all the leading Nutwood chums, and although Tony always keeps a few things up his sleeve, he has hinted that there will be more superb Rupert models, whether to raffle, auction, or just to admire.

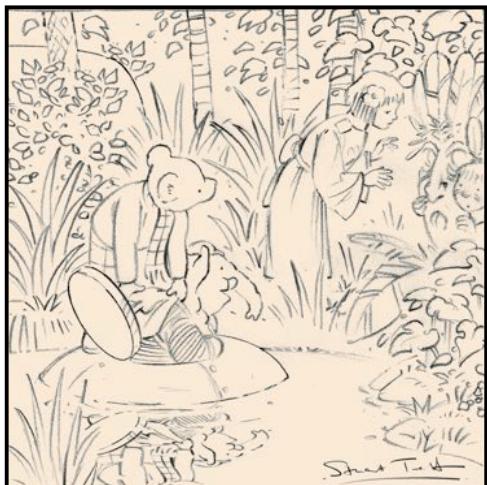
Well just writing this has made me excited; so roll on August when I look forward to meeting up with as many of you as can make it. However, if you can't make it don't forget to send off for your signed annual and your raffle tickets; there are some great prizes this year.

Best wishes to you all.

John Swan (Chairman)

The Rupert Raffle

As always we have a good number of rare and unique items on offer as prizes. As well as some Gina Hart artwork and a good number of her Rupert story artcells that we noted in the last Nutwood Newsletter, we also have a lovely piece of Rupert artwork by the current Rupert artist Stuart Trotter.



Stuart is in the process of colouring this picture

We believe this is the first piece of Stuart's work to become available so the opportunity to own it is not to be missed.

We are also offering an exclusive and unique Podgy, which measures 18 inches high and is shown here, created by the talented sculptor Terry Webster. Terry, who trained at Birmingham Art School, has been a professional Animal Model Maker since 1986. His limited editions, which have won many awards, have been exhibited extensively in this country and internationally, and are sold via high-class outlets such as Harrods.



This is also the only opportunity for non-attending members to get hold of one of our exclusive John Hunt models, (6 inches high), as we are offering two as prizes.

Don't forget, there are over 50 exclusive Rupert prizes; the wonderful artwork and models mentioned above and also some Rupert Annual cover proofs, supplied by Egmont, so get your application for tickets in without delay on the enclosed form. Please note that the closing date for postal applications is August 14th to enable Roger and Christine to process them.

Landladies of Sandy Bay

Readers will recall that in the *Nutwood Newsletter* number 72 Phil Toze introduced us to Mrs Tiger, who appeared regularly in Rupert adventures, but Mrs Tiger is not the only landlady who provides home comforts while Rupert is on holiday, as Phil explains.

Mrs Leopard

Mrs Leopard, a landlady at Sandy Bay, appears in only one adventure: *Rupert and the Castaway*, (B122) and her appearance is in one frame only.



The landlady allows Rupert's friend, Koko, to stay at her guest house.

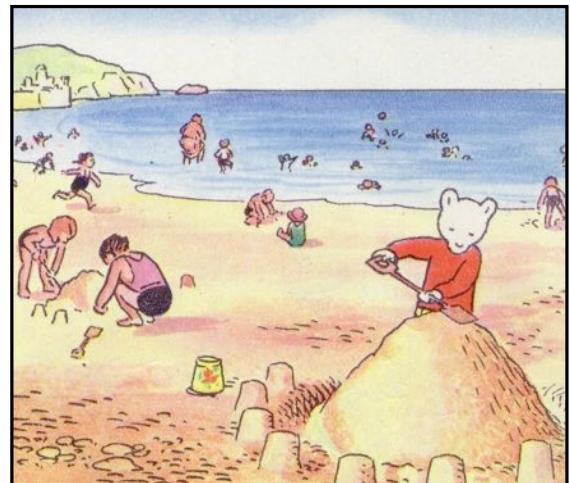
Like Mrs Tiger, she is pleasant, kindly and accommodating, allowing an extra chum who hasn't booked in!

The Daily Express story appears in the 1954 Rupert Annual.

Mrs Cheetah

Mrs Cheetah is another landlady at Sandy Bay. When Mrs Bear and Rupert stay at her guest house, she is kindly and accommodating, like Mrs Leopard, but, again, with only a brief appearance.

She also is unfazed by the arrival of an additional and unexpected guest. "Don't worry, Simon can share Rupert's room", the kind landlady exclaims, and makes up a spare bed, in the 1973 Daily Express story *Rupert on Chariot Island*. (P60)



Rupert will have all the home comforts when he returns from a hard day's castle-building or from another exciting adventure.



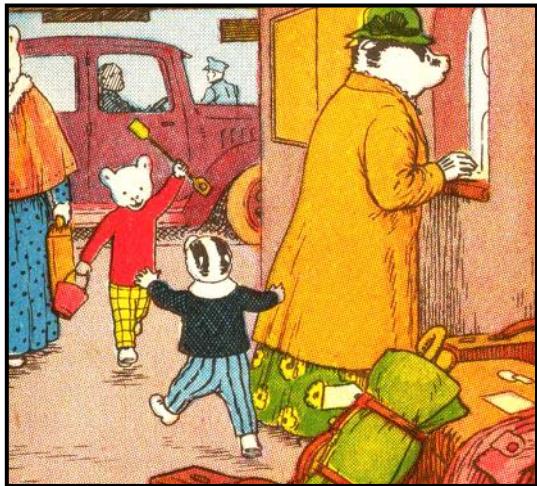
Mrs Cheetah is surprised to find one extra guest arrive.

So, while Mrs Tiger may rule supreme, it is good to note that some of her feline friends can also play the part.

Phil Toze

Rupert and Bill on holiday

When Rupert goes on holiday to the seaside he's sometimes accompanied by a pal, usually Bill Badger.



*The chums set off on holiday,
And Mrs B says she will pay!*

There are two holiday stories that have a number of similarities involving Rupert and Bill, and it's interesting to compare them. One is *Rupert and Bill Badger* by Mary Tourtel and the other is *Rupert at Sandy Bay* by Alfred Bestall. Mary's story was published in the *Daily Express* in 1925 and the *Daily Express Children's Annual* in 1933; Alfred's story was published in the *Daily Express* in 1938 and in the *Annual More Adventures of Rupert* in 1942.



*Mrs Badger looks so strong,
And carries all the bags along.*

In her rhyming story Mary uses a puzzling mixture of past and present tense, whilst Alfred sticks to the present tense throughout his rhymes and text. Mary's story contains old-fashioned politeness; Mrs Bear and Mrs Badger shake hands when meeting, they address each other as 'Mrs', Bill calls his granny 'Grandmamma' and the pals formally ask Bill's mum



*"Cottage, with roses round the door,
I wonder, have I been before?"*

if they can play by the sea. In Alfred's story there is an informal, relaxed atmosphere throughout.



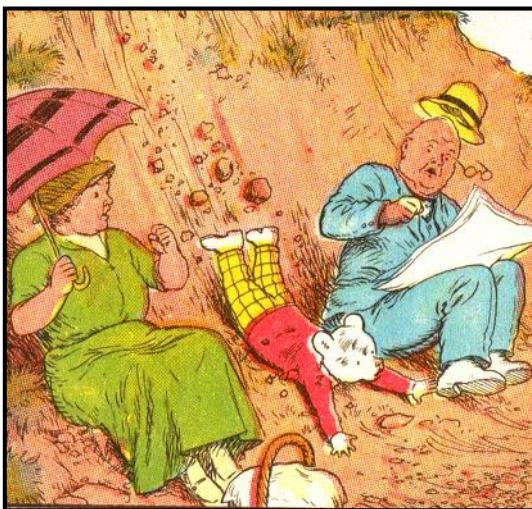
*They meet the husband and the wife,
A seaside shack – this is the life!*

In both stories it's Mrs Badger who takes the chums by train to the seaside (Moorsea in Mary's and Sandy

Bay in Alfred's). In the intervening years between the two publications Mrs Badger has either mellowed in attitude or become financially better off.

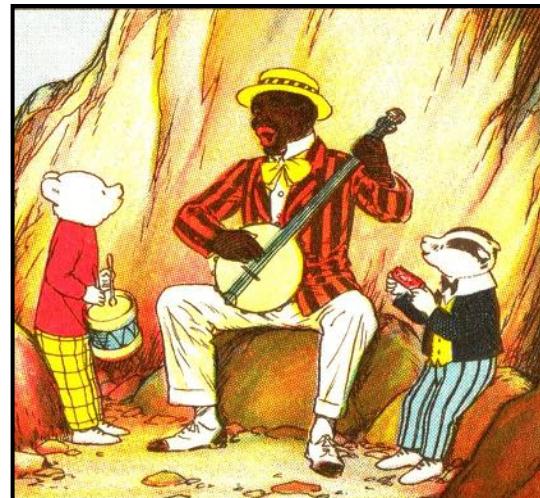
In Mary's story it's Mrs Bear who has to pay for Rupert's train fare to Moorsea and Mrs Badger pays for herself and Bill; in Alfred's story it's Mrs Badger who pays for Rupert (so she should, after all she invited Rupert along as a companion for her son).

When the trio arrive at their holiday cottage near the sea both artists depict the structure as having roses around the door supported by a trellis. The chums carry their empty buckets and spades in anticipation of having a jolly time (and thankfully, in both stories, it never rains). Mrs Badger takes quite a lot of luggage on holiday in Alfred's story. As she has to keep hold of Bill who's been naughty, we assume she requires the assistance of a porter and a taxi (the cottage is situated up a steep hill). In Mary's story Mrs Badger looks strong and purposeful as she carries two suitcases to the cottage.



*The pair sat on the beach below,
Rupert dropped in to say "hello".*

Different adventures befall the chums in the two stories. In Mary's the duo encounter an old sailor and his wife (who address each other as 'wife' and 'husband'), and a parrot. In Alfred's they encounter an old couple (who don't address each other at all), and a minstrel gentleman of a certain colour, complete with



*The Minstrel on his banjo strums,
And entertains the lucky chums.*

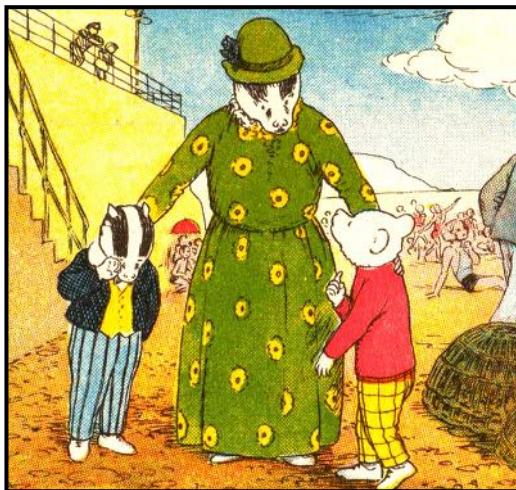
his boater hat, striped blazer and banjo. Rupert understands what he's saying despite the man's 'de', 'dat' and 'dere'.

In Mary's story Mrs Badger appears emotionless, straight-laced, and somewhat formidable; in Alfred's story she panics when Bill disappears, screams when she sees the muddy Rupert, fumes and causes Bill to



*As Rupert frolics in the sea,
His "human" feet we all can see.*

cry. Perhaps Mr Badger enjoyed his few days alone in Nutwood on both occasions.



*"You two, in trouble once again,
It's time we caught the Nutwood train!"*

Both stories illustrate Rupert and Bill with bare human-like feet, and my, don't they look overdressed compared to the other children, in their beachwear, on the sands! And both holidays have the usual predictable happy ending. But we must feel sympathy for Mrs Badger at both conclusions – Mary draws her manfully carrying the two suitcases to the railway station, and Alfred draws her looking flustered as she hurries the young chums on the train home to Nutwood.

Ruth Sear

Finger Puppets

We are not sure where they originated from, but imagine they were part of some food packaging in 1970. It was intended they be cut out for use and there were only the six shown, as this is all that are listed. Apparently there were stories to be acted out featured on the included sachets. Does any Follower have further information?

The Editorial Elf



More Goodies on the day.....

Rupert Auction

It is a while since we held an auction at the Annual Meeting but feel it should happen again to give everyone a chance to own this marvellous Terry Webster original sculpture of Rupert and Beppo on a Polar Bear. As can be seen from the picture it is something rather special and measures 18 inches high and 20 inches from nose to tail.



To ensure all members have a chance of owning this lovely item we are taking sealed bids from non-attending members. All you have to do to be included is to make a note of the maximum you would be prepared to pay, seal it in an envelope marked "Auction", and then send this in another envelope addressed to Tony Griffin. This will then be handed unopened to the auctioneer on the day and he will then open your envelope and bid on your behalf up to your maximum if needed.



Attending members can of course bid in the room and we are hoping to have a professional auctioneer from a local auction house to take the auction on the day.

Secrets of the Annual Meeting Artwork Revealed

Many of you who have attended past Annual Meetings have commented enthusiastically about the artwork, which adorns the badges, programme, menus, place mats and other delights you receive on the day. We can reveal that this is the work of talented artist Gillian Chapman.

Gillian has a website that deals mainly with her felt making business but recently she has posted details of her Rupert artwork in progress. She explains how she approaches the project and the methods she adopts. It is Gillian's intention to update the website, showing how her work develops, and Followers may enjoy the opportunity to follow the progress.



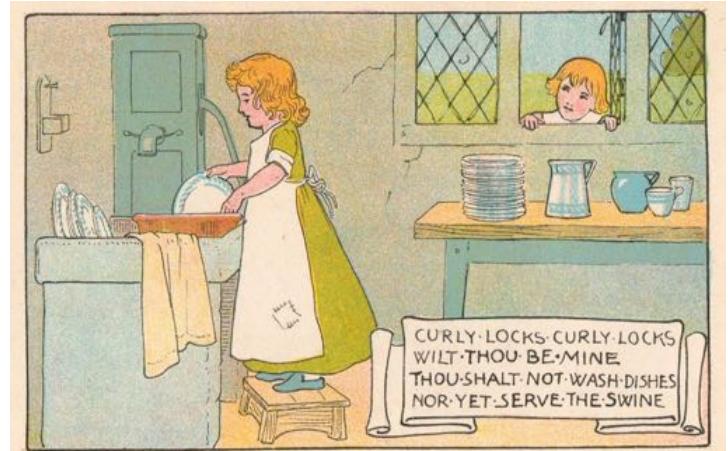
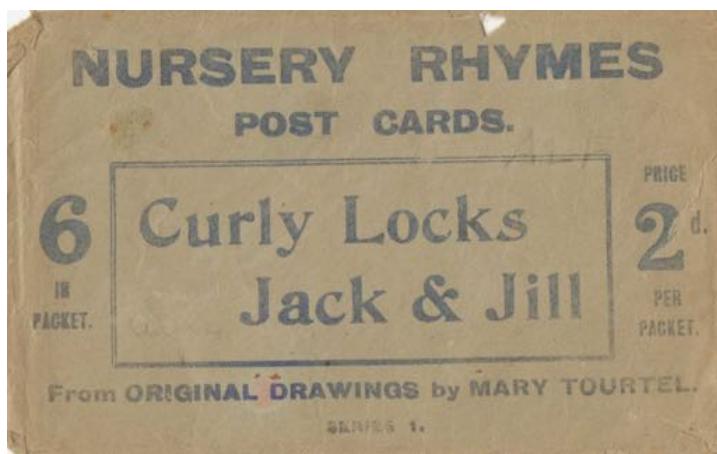
Work in progress

Gillian's website can be found at <http://www.gillianchapmanfelts.info/2011/05/following-rupert-part-1.html>

Visit and enjoy!

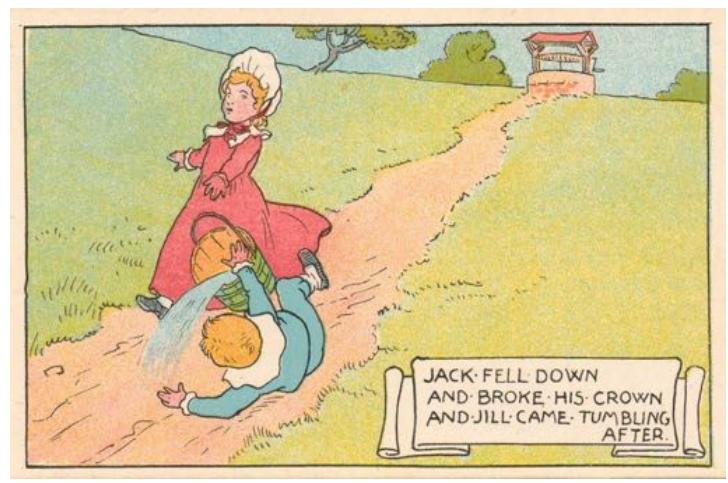
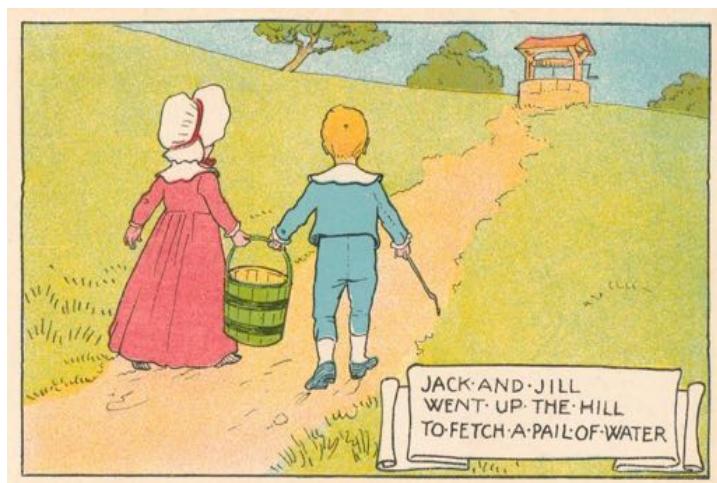
Early Mary Tourtel Postcards

It is not generally known but Mary Tourtel was a well-published artist before she started her Rupert stories. She wrote and illustrated a number of books starting with “A Horse Book” some twenty years before Rupert appeared and we hope to include details of these in a future Newsletter.



She also produced eight sets of six Nursery Rhyme postcards for the Living Picture Company of Leicester from 1904.

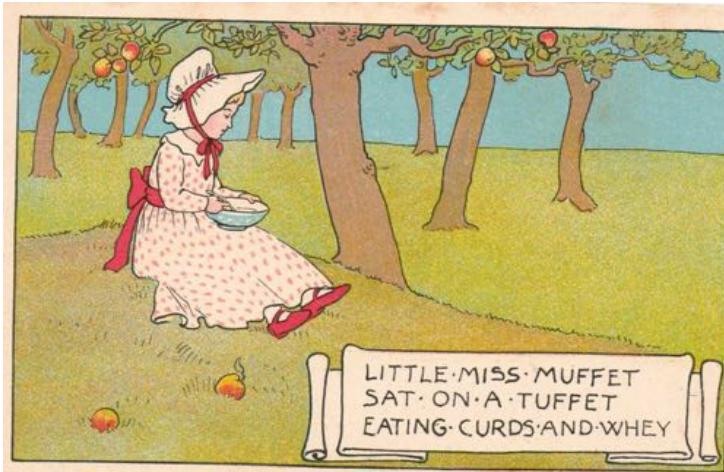
They were originally sold in envelopes at 2d for the set of six.

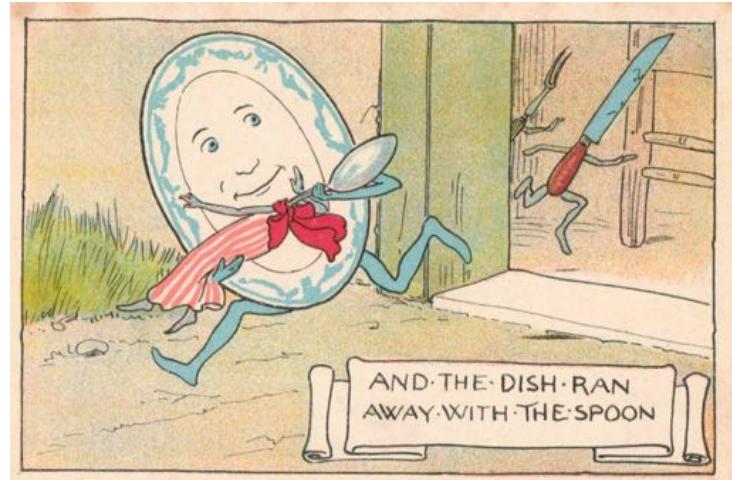
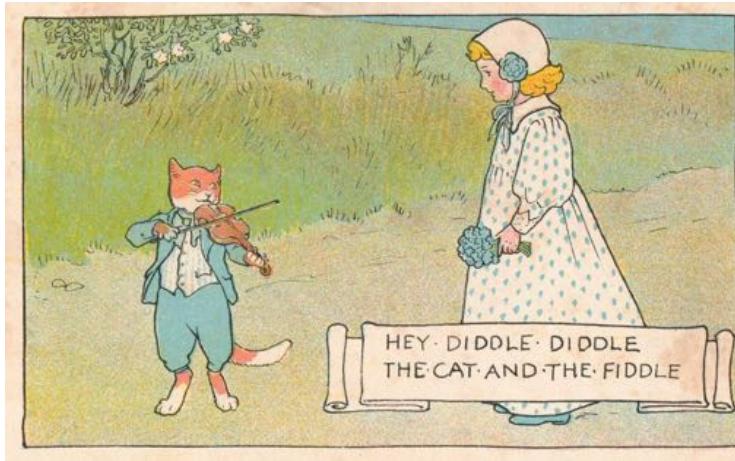




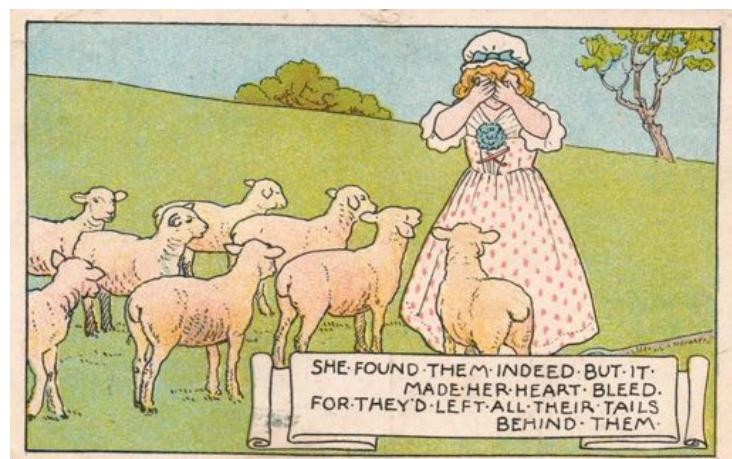
As you will see from the examples shown here that the layout of her images are similar in style to that she was to use in her Rupert pictures.

The nursery rhymes seem to be depicted over two to four cards in a set.

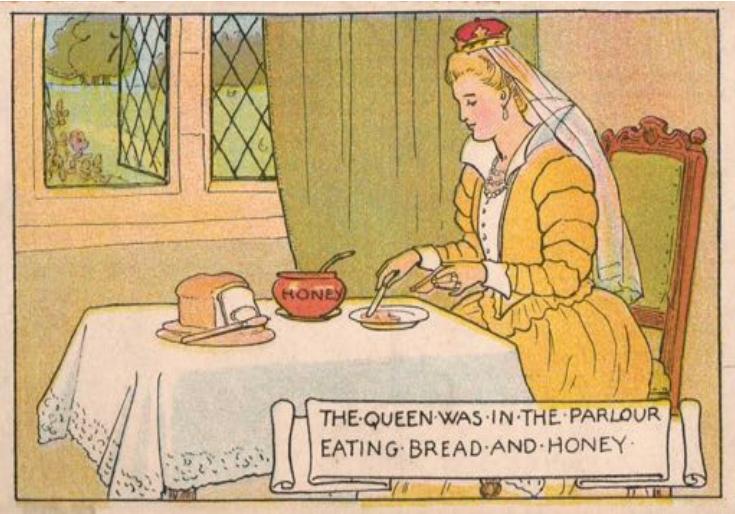




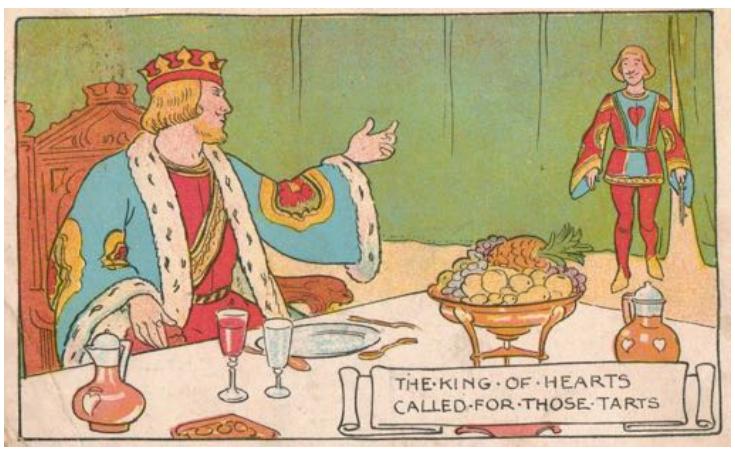
There are some cards missing from the items we have access to, and if anyone has examples of those we would be pleased to see them.



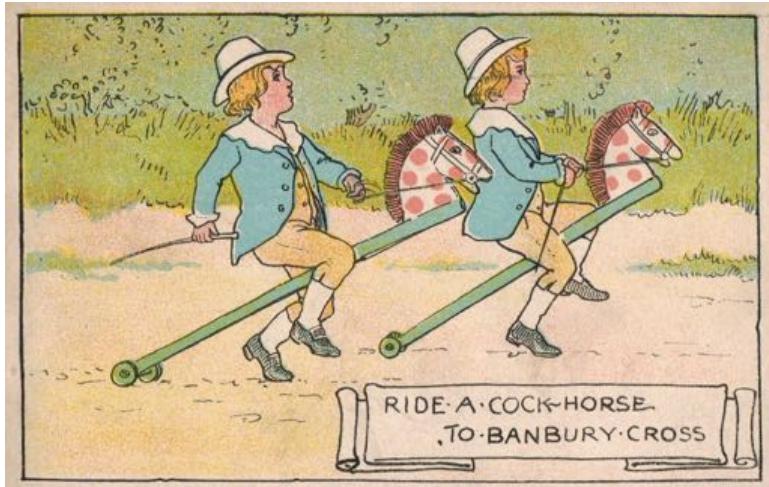
Most of the ones illustrated here are unused but the posted examples are post-marked around 1908 and 1909



These early postcards can still be found with diligent searching at postcard fairs, but complete sets of six in their original envelopes are very elusive



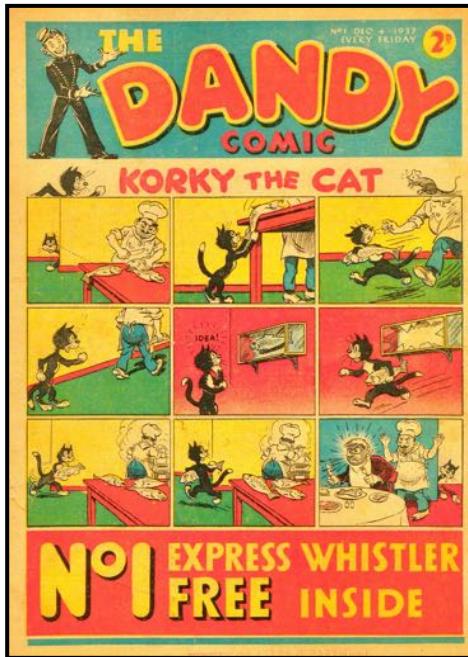
The series were titled as follows:-



1. Curly Locks/Jack & Jill
2. The Knave of Hearts
3. There was a Little Man/Ride a Cock Horse
4. Hey Diddle Diddle/Little Miss Muffet
5. Where are You Going to My Pretty Maid
6. Little Bo-Peep
7. Sing a Song of Sixpence
8. Simple Simon

John Beck

Rupert and Korky

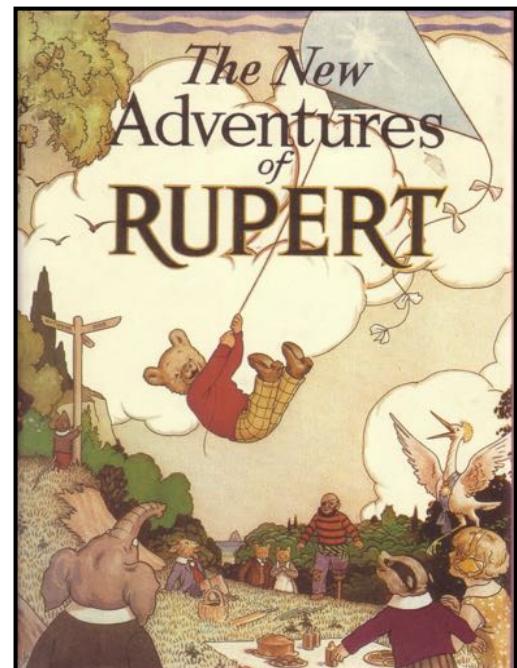


Three cheers for Rupert, our much celebrated bear, but how about Korky? “Dandy” comic readers over the years will certainly be familiar with that feline creation that has graced the cover of innumerable comics and annuals.

However, since the close of the last century, whilst Rupert has been “bearing up” (here we go again!) Korky the cat has been, yes, “catnapping”.

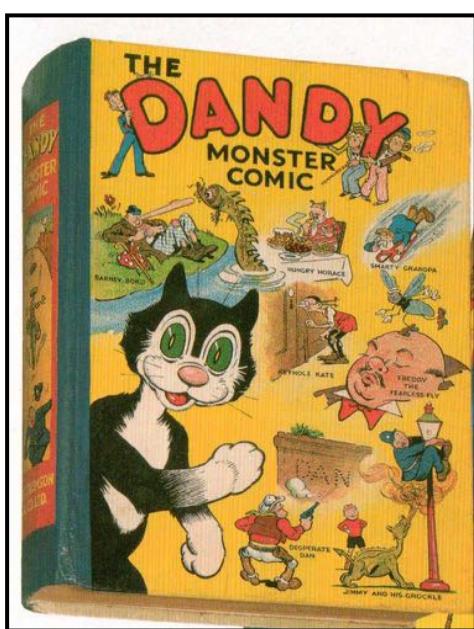
Korky was that clever concept of James Crichton who drew the character for its first twenty five years for the cover of well over one thousand Dandy comics and about twenty plus annuals. Unfortunately, Crichton died in 1962 and Korky, just like Rupert, was effectively rescued and redrawn by further artists throughout the 1960’s, 70’s and 80’s, but, unlike the famous bear, his career had tailed off by the 1990’s.

Korky was “born” on the 4th of December 1937, seventeen years after Rupert but whereas the little bear had an inauspicious start in a single panel illustration, tucked well inside the Daily Express, Korky was splashed all over the first Dandy comic in full colour cartoon squares, well promoted in the D C Thomson Ltd tradition. Viewed now from a distance of many decades, both the debut of Rupert and Korky appear extraordinarily simplistic, Rupert setting off on an errand for his very traditional parents and Korky stealing a fish from a chef, being caught, and then getting his own back. Perhaps the very basic nature of both these contrasting illustrations gives a clue to their appeal and consequently to their brilliant development.



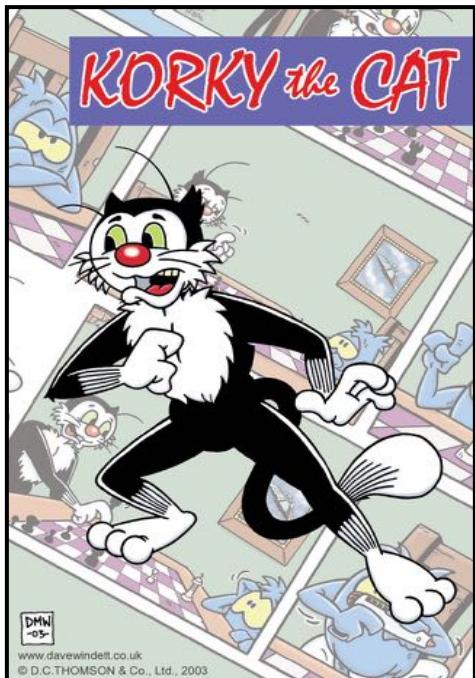
It is interesting to compare these two iconic annuals. Both illustrations on the respective covers make it quite clear who the cover star is! The 1936 dust-wrapper shows a confident Rupert hanging from a kite drifting over his domain whilst the Dandy board exhibits a very large Korky introducing a myriad of well known cartoon characters albeit in smaller format. Both covers are a huge testimony to artistic geniuses and it is no surprise that the first Rupert annual and Dandy Monster Comic annual are indeed very expensive collectors’ items.

Fast forward to the late 1980’s and Rupert was still headlining his own annual. By 1985 Rupert had notched up no less than fifty annuals and his triumph is wonderfully captured by the cover picture of that annual.



This shows Rupert being held aloft, not by a kite this time, but by Algy and Bill, his chums and to the delight of a huge Nutwood audience including no less a personage than Alfred Bestall! This cover is a masterstroke of design by John Harrold. Just three years later, however, Korky was also celebrating his 50th cover appearance on the Dandy annual, aboard a boat with his many pals but ironically still acquiring a fish, but this time catching it!

So half a century of annuals as cover stars by the 1980's had both Rupert and Korky placed as the superstars of comic creations, but whilst Rupert has remained “bear supreme” what happened to the former “top cat”?



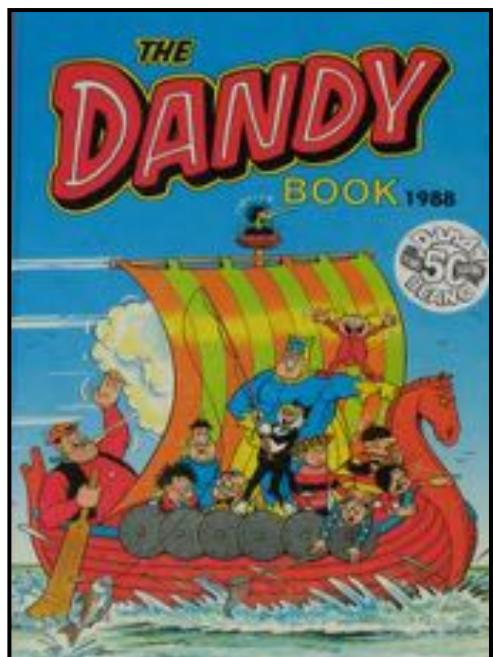
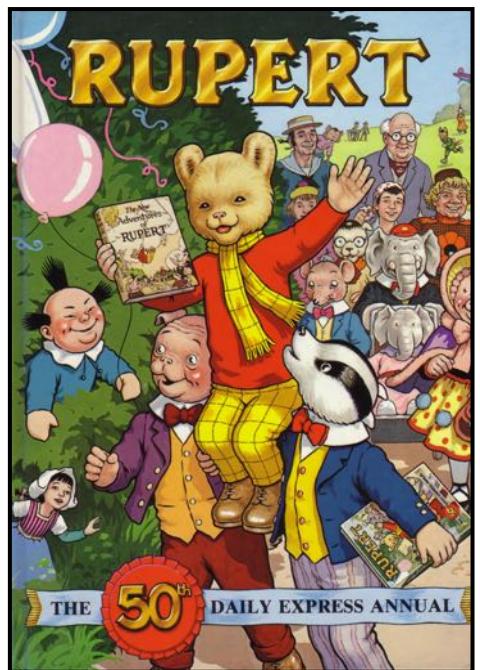
The twilight years of Korky were characterised by a different looking Korky, once again redesigned but now looking quite different. This version of Korky appeared sporadically in the Dandy cover after 1988 and periodically inside but by the 1990's this cat was playing “second fiddle” to Dandy's strong-arm man, Desperate Dan. Dan was by now the undisputed cover star of both the Dandy comic and the annual, and has remained so to this day.

Korky may well have commiserated with that other erstwhile ousted character, Biffo the Bear. Biffo had lost his cover status both on the Beano comic and annual to no less than Denis the Menace, back in 1975. It is ironic indeed that both animal cartoon characters have had to give way to two “human” cartoon figures admittedly of a dynamic, powerful persuasion.

Meanwhile, Rupert, arguably an animal cartoon creation has had the last laugh since he has the best of both worlds, the intrinsic appeal of a bear, but with human characteristics

Nevertheless, statistically, Korky is second only to Rupert in the 20th century longevity stakes, reigning not only as an annual and comic cover star for decades but as an original in one of the two best selling UK comics of all time. For these achievements this cat deserves not only his fish but cream as well. Perhaps recognition could come in the form of his own annual, after all Desperate Dan has had one, also Dennis and even the Bash Street Kids. An all colour book of Korky strips would certainly be justified as a one-off, and could even complement the regular Rupert annual.

So, in conclusion, Rupert and Korky have come a long way since their inception. The “little bear” is still a symbol of good natured adventure and innocence, whilst the “comical cat” has always represented innocent but mischievous fun, but both are now stalwarts of children's classic cartoon literature.

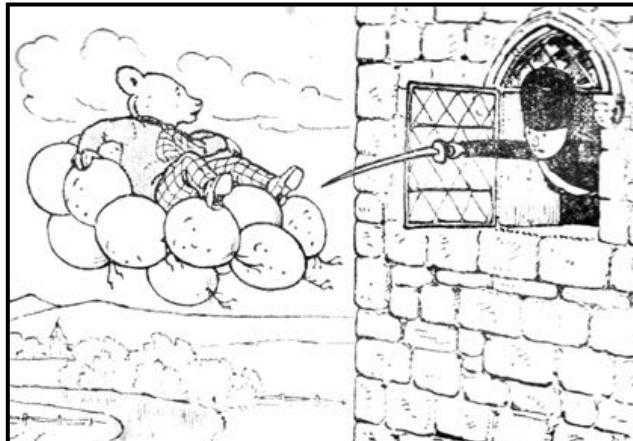


Gordon Bramham

Absent Friends

During his 90 years of existence Rupert has gathered around him a host of friends and other characters who make up what we might call the Nutwood Community. Not all of these have endured and there have often been comments about the likes of Rollo, the Three Guides and Father Christmas' stalwart assistant, Golly, not being seen for some years.

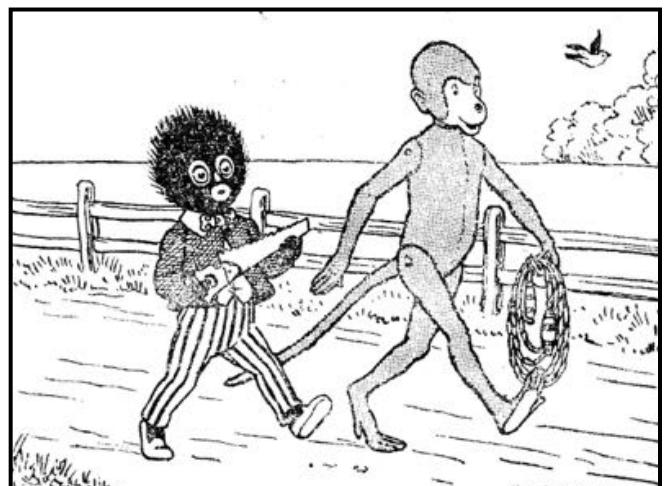
These characters were all the creation of Alfred Bestall, of course, but many of the friends produced by Mary Tourtel failed to make the transition to AEB and have fallen by the wayside. Time, I think, to recall them and celebrate these absent friends.



Rupert sets off on his first adventure on 8 November 1920 and within three frames is lost. He comes across a mole who is unable to help him and, as far as I can see (which may be no further than the mole) is never sighted again. In frame five Rupert makes the acquaintance of some friendly air balloons and these do re-appear, being instrumental in saving Rupert from Ogre Gruffenuff in the second full length Rupert story, *Rupert Gets Captured* (T3), after watching Rupert on ice in the brief Christmas holiday interlude in between. That's their lot, though – the air balloons that kidnap Margot a few years later in *Rupert and His Friend Margot* (T35) aren't friendly at all.

At first the air balloons think Rupert is a toy and leave him with other toys including Jacko the monkey and Golli the golliwog, the first friends he meets to be named. These are more durable, being regulars in the

first few adventures and among those who rally round Rupert in *Rupert and the Ogres* (T5). They fail to return after *Rupert's Christmas Adventure* (T30) in 1925 but between them they made an appearance in nine of Rupert's adventures so we ought to be aware of them.



The most fleeting of friends is Sammy Squirrel, whom Rupert meets soon after leaving Jacko and Golli in his first adventure. Sammy uses his telescope to try to spy Rupert's home but has to advise Rupert to consult Bill Badger for further information. In *Rupert and the Ogres*, Sammy Squirrel, in his tree, is the first to be aware of the Ogre/Witches plot against Rupert and alerts the Rabbit Twins to the danger. Rupert often chats to squirrels in the years to come but none of them



is called Sammy and none has a telescope. Whilst the air balloons were always likely to be precarious and restricted friends, Sammy could have been a regular member of the cast – but patently wasn't.

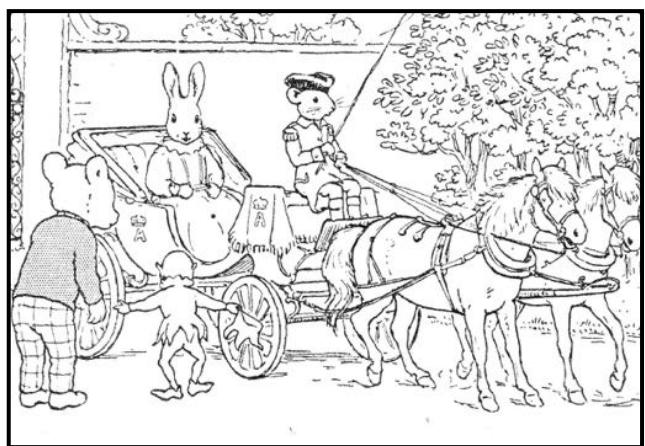


More new characters are ‘auditioned’ and discarded in the stories that follow. There is a whole class full of them in *Rupert at School* (T7) but only Edward Trunk makes an immediate impact there, though Freddie Fox becomes more permanent later on. The likes of Thomas Catt, Henry Hare, Sidney Squirrel (any relative of Sammy?) and John Bobtail all fail the course. This is the real 1922 vintage, incidentally, not the 1933 story which is mistakenly cited as the earlier tale in the recently published “The Rupert Companion”.

Rupert and the Magic Toyman (T9) begins with Rupert going to a sports meeting with his friend, the

than some, for a picture of him with his little bicycle adorned the storybook version of the tale and also a Monster Rupert later, and, since that picture appeared in the 2010 Rupert Annual, this absent friend has had an unexpectedly recent presence.

Rupert's next fleeting friend is royalty (Princess Annabel, a dignified rabbit) in *Rupert and the Brigands* (T13) and the same story also introduces her loyal servant, the Little Man in Green. The Princess is kidnapped in this story but Rupert and the Little Man in Green come to her rescue, once they have located the Fairy Miller. Soon after, *The Little Man in Green* stars in his own story (T16) and some time later, after Rupert has rescued Margot from a court of vindictive balloons (Margot always needs rescuing it seems) and evaded an ugly ogre, there is a grand reunion at Princess Annabel's court to end the adventure. A squirrel footman is sent to call the Little Man in Green – maybe that's what happened to Sammy (or Sidney).



Margot finds the Princess far more pleasant than the Queen Balloon she encountered earlier. Mary Tourtel, though, decided it was time to move on, so royal rabbit and little man were seen no more.

Two sprightly youngsters called the Nippertails arrive next in a very brief (5 frame) story *Rupert's New Neighbours* (T23). Such a fuss is made about these little dogs (Percy and Podge) that we also meet their mother and baby when Mrs Bear visits the family – quite large by Nutwood standards. They are quickly into action in the next adventure, *Rupert and the Stolen Apples* (T24), discovering a fox and a pig (anonymous at this stage but nameable in retrospect) as the real thieves after Rupert has been accused of the theft.



Lizard. The lizard is unnamed (always ominous for a character's future) and, sure enough, disappears from the series after just four pictures. He is, though, luckier



Appearing in two more stories in that year (1925), the doggie twins seemed to have attained the status of regulars but then they were quietly dropped, proving ‘one year wonders’ and nothing more. There is no clear



view of them, even at their own fancy dress party (T43) two years later, their mention promising a revival which never came.

By that time, though, their given names were being allocated elsewhere. Podgy Pig had already arrived and his companion in mischief, Percy Fox, was on the horizon. Indeed that story has the first sighting of fox twins, taken up in earnest at the end of the Tourtel era in *Rupert, the Manikin and the Black Knight* (T84), where Freddie and Percy finally link up (enabling Podgy to be his own pig in future), and the Nippertails may have been a pair of twins too many. Percy would be re-named Ferdy under Bestall.

And after that glimpse into the future, now we must

backtrack. During the search for the Fairy Miller in *Rupert and the Brigands*, Rupert and the Little Man in Green are helped by a barn-owl – a precursor, perhaps, of Bestall’s Wise Old Owl. Immediately prior to this, though, there is arguably a preview of one of Mary Tourtel’s own characters when Rupert and the LMG have to persuade the Lazy Pig (Timothy Pig) to tell them the way.



In “The Rupert Companion” Ian Robinson (wrongly in my view) shows a picture of this incident, claiming that the pig is Podgy, but a similar Timothy Pig, this time a close friend, accompanies Rupert into



the Wood of Mystery (T46) and Podgy is already established by the time of this later tale. That these are two different pigs is shown by their characters. Podgy is no friend of Rupert’s in his early appearances; he is a trouble maker and only when he detaches himself from Percy Fox and, effectively, only under Bestall does he change. Tim Pig is taller than Podgy but more like Bestall’s character in behaviour. Whether or not



Mary Tourtel (in intention) or Bestall (in fact) did transform her earlier Lazy Pig into Rupert's later friend, there was clearly no future for two pigs in the pantheon and *Rupert in the Wood of Mystery* remains Timothy's only major outing and his swansong.

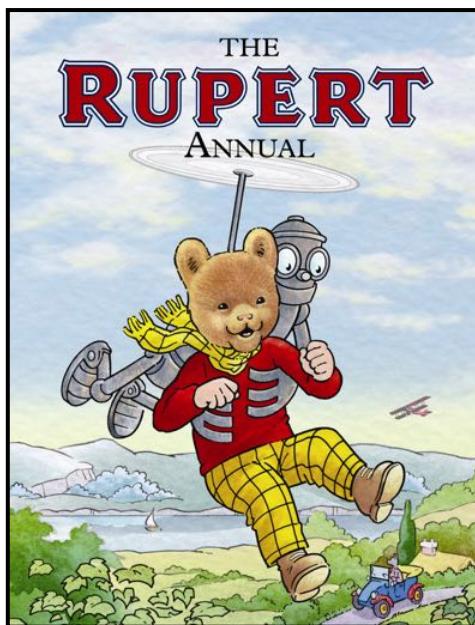
There are many more, including Red Cap, the Wise Old Goat's little fairy gnome messenger who appears on three occasions over the years but does not accompany his master into Bestall's stories. But that will have to do for now. So, if we're ready to drink our toast to absent friends, let's remind ourselves of the roll call.

First we had the air balloons, followed by Jacko and Golli, Sammy Squirrel, the Lizard, Princess Annabel and the Little Man in Green, the Nippertails, Tim Pig and Red Cap. If we are of a forgiving nature we might include those two bullies, Hubert Hippo and Wally Wolf in the list and of course there are also various Rupert relatives (Cousin Joan for one) to bear in mind along the way. Add any others that take your fancy as I call upon you to remember and applaud these absent friends.

John Lester

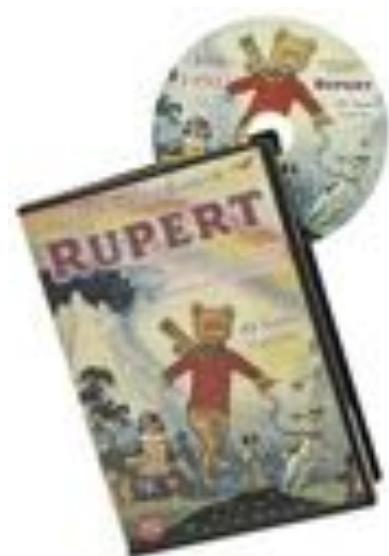
A New Rupert Product

If you are not already aware Create and Craft have launched some Rupert CD's and Tunnel card kits covering the Rupert Annuals from 1936 to 1950. Demonstrations were shown on satellite TV over a couple of days in April and Follower Roger Coombes was on hand to answer technical questions on Rupert. If you wish to see details of the Create and Crafts range we suggest you visit their website at www.createandcraft.tv/followersofrupert. They are hoping to produce further kits featuring Rupert annuals and we have invited them to attend our Annual Meeting to give some demonstrations.



2011 Rupert Annual

We are informed that the production run for this year's Rupert Annual will be 40,000 copies, the same as last year. The 2010 Rupert quickly sold out with a good number of collectors being disappointed and copies were then selling on e-bay for up to £60. You can make sure of your copy for this year by ordering from us and it might be sensible to buy a further copy or two, not only for Christmas presents, but for future swapping potential. An order form is included with this Newsletter.



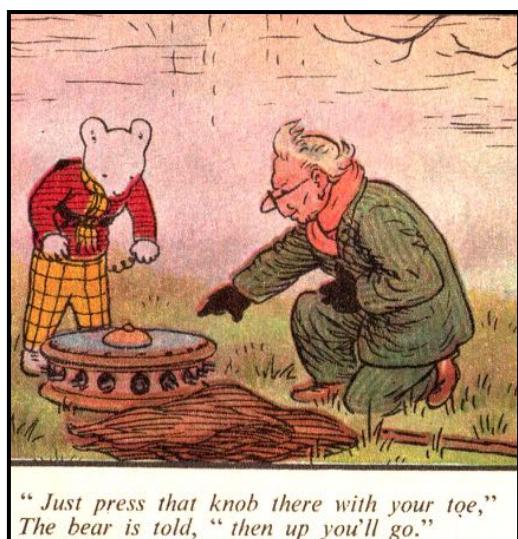
Rupert in the Daily and Sunday Express

For almost a decade the Express has followed a policy of reprinting old Rupert stories, selecting mostly from AEB's long era. It is almost two years since we had a story drawn by another artist (Jenny Kisler in July-August 2009). In the last examination in this column, in NN 77, it was noted with approval that between July and October 2010 the three stories selected were all first reprints in the paper. It has been my contention that if we are to have reprints they should be stories that have not previously been reprinted and I have been critical of the overuse of some stories when there is a sizeable stock of others which have never been reprinted in the



paper. I have also made a case for printing the frames of these stories in their original size so that readers are better able to appreciate and enjoy the detail of these beautiful drawings. As well as giving pleasure to Followers, such regard for the quality of the drawings would be likely to attract new admirers of the Rupert feature in the newspapers. In the batch of reprints now to be reported there is mixed news.

The last story to be noted in NN 77 was *Rupert and the Flying Bottle* (B10), an early Bestall yarn from 1936 and the 1937 Annual, which began on 3rd October and was completed on 28th October 2010. All 26 episodes were reprinted, with Monday episodes coloured. It is a story which uses Podgy's greed as a catalyst for the adventure, and curiously he is named Podgy Porker instead of Podgy Pig.

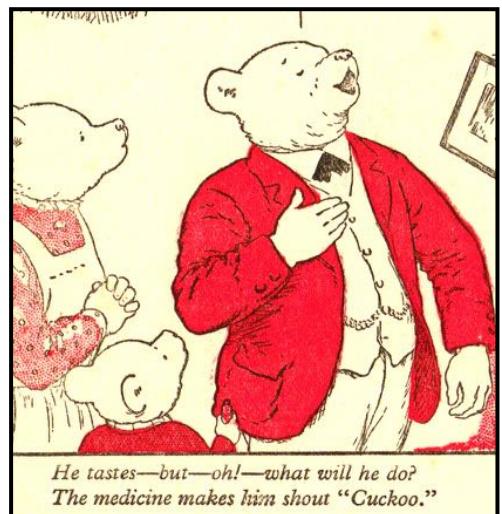


The next story was another first re-telling. *Rupert and the Blue Firework* (B124) originally appeared in 1950 and this was taken from its subsequent inclusion in the 1955 Annual. It had also been used in the Sunday Express Magazine in 1987. This time it ran between 29th October and 1st December, with all 34 episodes included. I remember this story very well, having found, as a 6 year old, the strange inventor, with his habit of emerging from and disappearing into the fog, quite spooky. Viewing him again now I am struck by his resemblance to the late political commentator Robin Day! Episode 22 is a good example of how well Alfred captured the sinister atmosphere of fog.

It was followed on 2nd December by *Rupert and the Cuckoo Clock* (B25). This was its second reprint since its

original appearance in 1937-1938, the first being in 1995. It has had two annual appearances, in 1938 and 1984. The full re-telling was completed on Boxing Day, 26th December. Episode 7 shows a humorous view of Mr Bear as he starts to "cuckoo".

It was a second reprint also for the next tale which followed on 27th December and ran through all 46 original episodes to 10th February 2011. This was *Rupert and Miranda* (B118), dating originally from





1949-1950, with its Annual appearance in 1953. It had a complete re-run as recently as 2005.

Perhaps anticipating a repeat of the weather we had at this time last year, *Rupert's Adventures in the Snow* (B5) came next between 11th February and 24th March. Dating from January and February 1936, with a subsequent appearance in the 1939 Annual, this was originally comprised of 43 episodes, but in this first reprint it had the original Episode 18 pruned, which is included here in the interest of completion.

There was also a slight change to the title, with the original "Snows" clipped to "Snow". It is also noted that from 20th February the size of the frames in the Sunday Express has increased to approximately two and a half inches by three inches (I do NOT do metric!) which is welcome as it addresses my

request for larger images repeated at the beginning of this column.

Unfortunately, the daily paper continues to reproduce its episodes at the miserly size of an inch and a half by two inches. It is to be hoped that the editor of the Daily Express glances at the sister paper and follows suit.

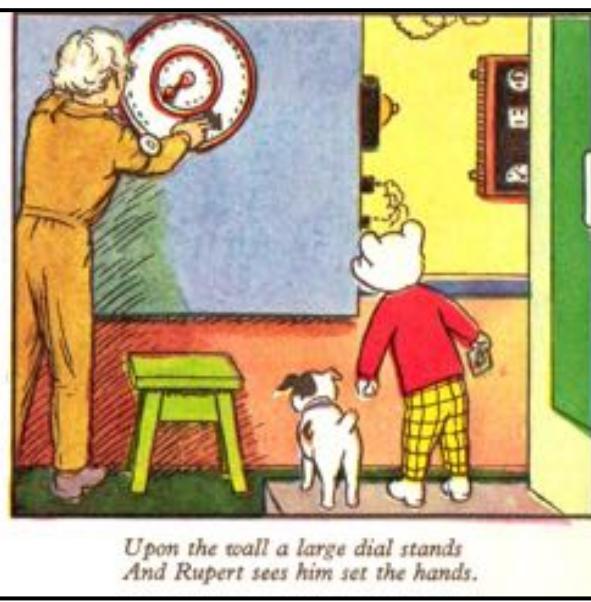
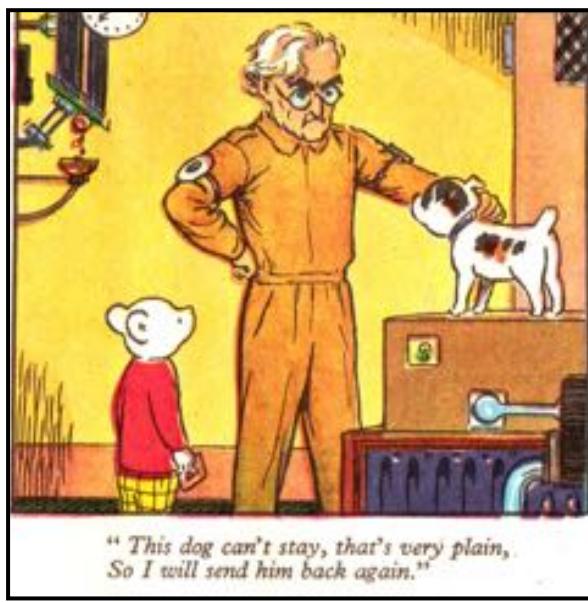
Podgy feels ill

RUPERT'S ADVENTURES IN THE SNOWS—No. 18

"You greedy thing," shouts Rupert, "now Mrs. Goat will have to wait for her medicine, and she is very ill." But Podgy is feeling too sorry for himself to listen to his friend.

"It has made me feel awfully funny," groans Podgy, but Rupert is not sympathetic. "Now I shall have to tell Mrs. Goat and then fetch some more medicine," he says.

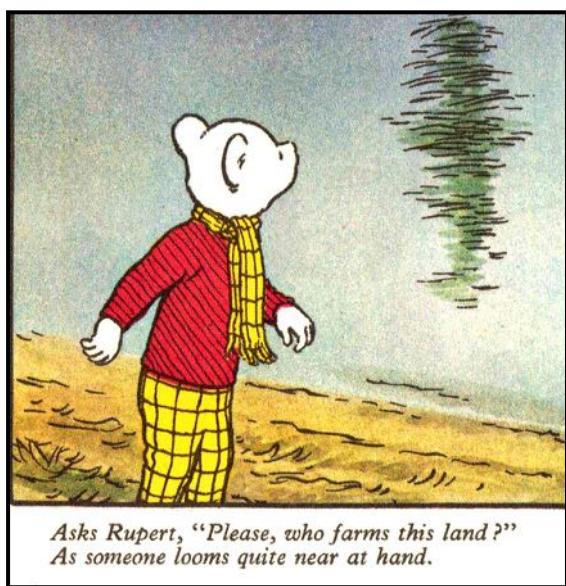
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The next retelling began on 25th March. *Rupert and the Inventor* (B154) was first published in the paper in 48 episodes in 1954.

It subsequently appeared in the 1963 Annual

and was reprinted, although shortened by one episode and with several errors, in 1986. This time we had the full story with the 1986 errors (which had included the frames of Episode 5 used in Episode 3, and mirror images in Episode 10!) corrected. The conclusion came on 11th May.



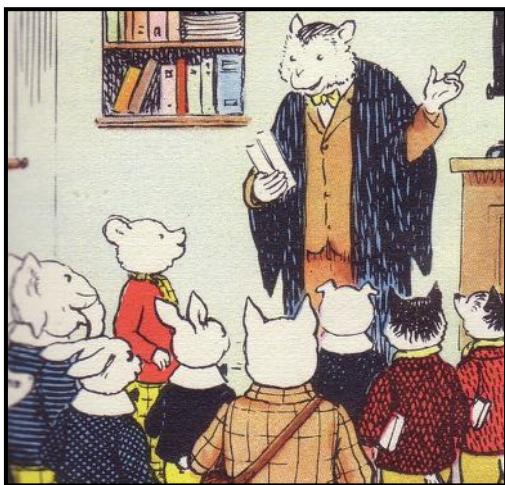
At the time of writing (May) the story currently running is *Rupert and the Old Hat* (B172) which first appeared in the Daily Express in 46 episodes in 1957 and subsequently in the 1965 Annual. It had a full reprint in 2003, making this its second retelling in the paper, beginning on 12th May. A full re-run should take us to 26th June. It has a similar subject to B25 (above) and Episode 9 is another example of how Alfred used line technique to convey the proximity of people or objects (in this case Odmedod) in the mist.

An interesting selection of reprints this time, albeit two were reprinted previously in the last decade. As in NN 77 we are taking our illustrations from the original printings rather than using the reduced and cropped frames still to be seen in the Daily Express. I hope Followers agree with me that the larger size frames currently being printed in the Sunday Express enhance one's reading of those episodes and I wonder whether a letter from every Follower to the Daily Express might persuade the editor to do likewise.

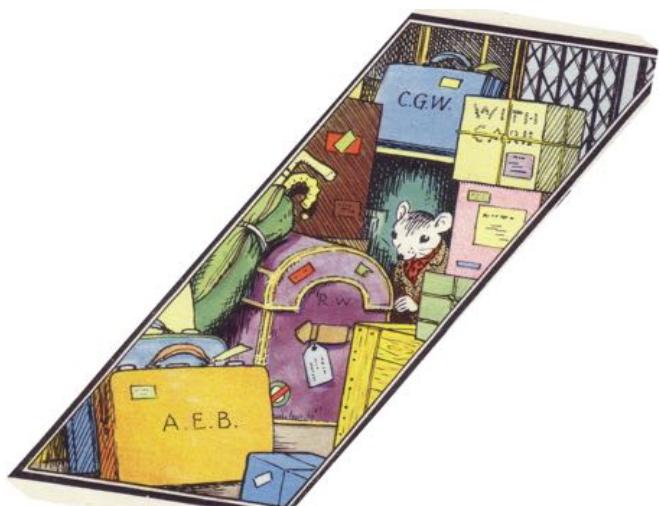
Roger Coombes

Rupert and the School trip

Remember your school trips? Remember the anticipation and feelings of excitement beforehand -



*The Master casually lets slip
He's taking them all on a trip.*

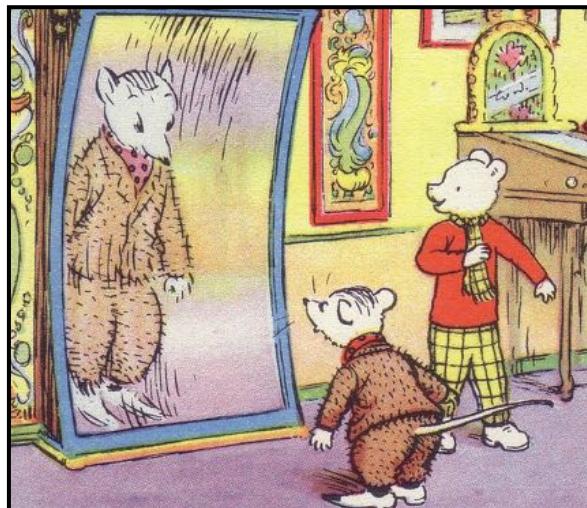


(mainly because of a day away from school and a visit to a gift shop?

Your mum carefully organizing the packed lunch and warning, 'don't eat the apple on the coach, it might make you sick.' The weather always seemed fine and sunny.....

Alfred Bestall's story about Rupert's school trip was published in the *Daily Express* (April to June 1944) and the *New Rupert Book* (1946) as *Rupert and 'Rastus*. In the first frame the schoolmaster (in later stories named Dr Chimp), suitably attired in gown and mortar-board, announces on the last day of term, 'I've booked tickets and am going to take you for an outing to the big town. So meet me at the station in the morning.' Can you imagine what the reaction of the youngster's parents might be to this sudden, previously unannounced plan?

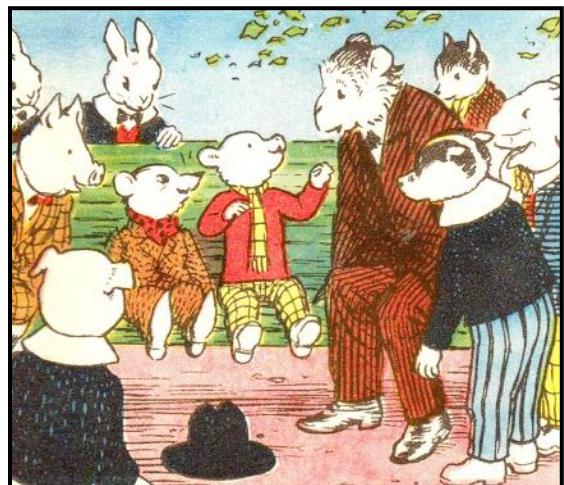
Willie Whiskers – in later stories known as Willie Mouse – is ill and unable to participate in the school trip. Willie's cousin 'Rastus, the country mouse, is coming to stay with Willie and Rupert has a bright idea – why shouldn't 'Rastus go on the trip instead of Willie?



*When 'Rastus his reflection sees,
It makes him quiver at the knees.*

Permission is obtained from Willie's mother. 'Rastus is delighted to be invited, and away he runs with Rupert to catch the train; but delayed by the mouse stopping to fasten his shoe-lace, the chums miss the train. The pair eventually reach the big town (the name is later disclosed as Nutchester) by stowing away in the wagons of a goods-train. 'Rastus absconds in fright and thanks to a passing soldier is found behind a news-board advertising the *Daily Express*; the chums board a bus but the frightened

mouse falls into the road and flees again when he views his distorted image in a mirror of a fun palace.



*When Master sits down for a chat,
He wears a different style of hat.*

The chums eventually reach Nutchester Park where they find the schoolmaster and Rupert's classmates. The schoolmaster has swapped his mortar-board for a trilby and his gown for an overcoat, this apparel being more appropriate for the town. The hat is used in a game and Rupert steals it for a joke. All is well at the conclusion of the story; the class visit a zoo and aquarium and return safely home.

Part of the charm of this story is that the schoolchildren were excited at the prospect of visiting a nearby town. Recently, the eleven year-old son of my neighbour went on a school trip to Dubai, which shows how times have changed.

Pause for thought.....

Why is there an apostrophe at the beginning of the name 'Rastus'? Because 'Rastus is an abbreviation of the Greek name Erastus. And there is another question that arises from this story. The illustration on page 20 of the *New Rupert Book* shows suitcases, trunks and boxes in a railway station. On three of the items there are initials. We know what A. E. B. represents. But for what do the initials R. W. and C. G. W. stand?

Ruth Sear

Another tit-bit

Collectors Gazette will be featuring an article on Rupert which will appear in the August edition. This goes on sale on the 15th July

This book belongs to?

Thankfully, there are still many old Rupert Annuals in circulation. They can be purchased from a variety of sources: car boot sales, jumble sales, flea markets, charity shops, second hand bookshops, book fairs, auction houses and the internet (eg eBay), or from a Followers AGM/meeting/ bourse.... how strange it is that an Annual can flit from owner to owner during its lifetime.

Starting in mint condition the book is joyfully received and loved by its first owner (well, we hope it is). The book may be passed on to family members, then round and round it goes, circulating through several ownerships (but wise children know that keeping the book, and in its original condition, makes it worth something one day). The Annual may survive to end its days with a caring collector, where it is (hopefully) joyfully received and loved again.

Meantime, throughout its travels, the Annual has enriched the lives and bestowed much pleasure and entertainment to its young readers. They discover origami, puzzles, crosswords and paintings among the pages. Ink, crayons, felt tip pens, paints, fizzy drinks, chocolate.... the pages are decorated by the youthful artist. But how we wish the juvenile had left them alone!

Those Magic Paintings that are *completed!* Why oh why weren't they left blank? And why are some paintings only partially completed?

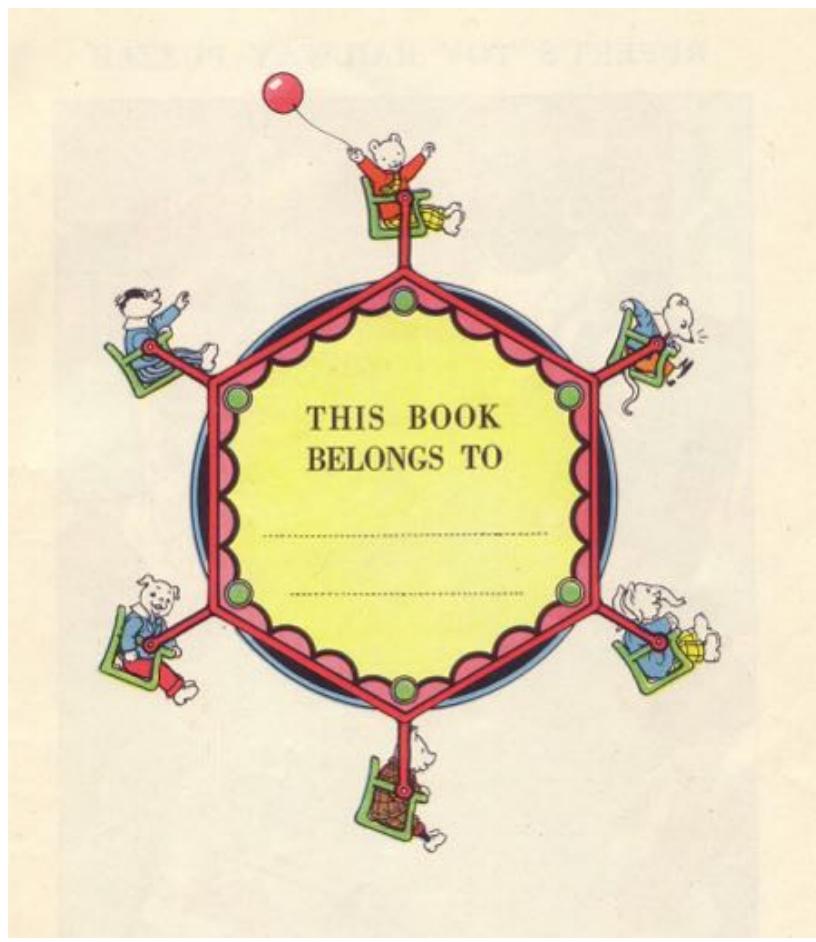
I know children's books are meant to be used and abused by their owners, but I wish some ethereal creature – perhaps an Imp of Spring – had whispered

in the child's ear that they must *not* desecrate the Annual, because one day a grown up would want it in at least very good condition. And why didn't that same creature whisper to the man at the Ministry who was responsible for the destruction of so many books during World War Two? What a daft idea, reducing poor Rupert to pulp!

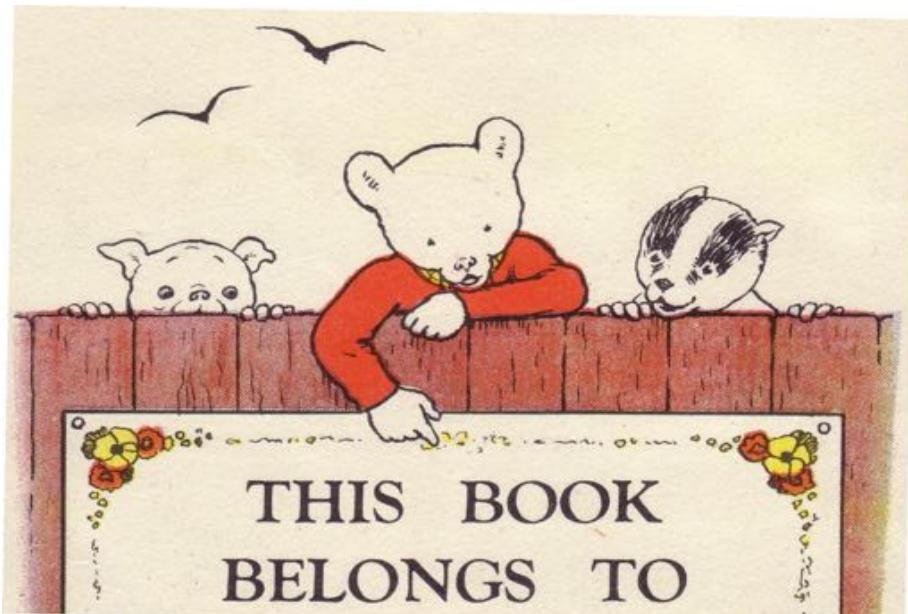
And why did many of the first owners write their names in the space following THIS BOOK BELONGS TO? Did Aunty Someone or Grandad Thingummy have to *write* about their love and best wishes for a Happy Birthday/Christmas? And why did the grown ups cut the prices from the corners of the pages? What with writing, colouring and mutilating, many Annuals are sadly now in poor condition, due to so much enthusiastic desecration.

I've been looking at the dedications pages in my second hand Annuals. If your name, dear Reader, is among the following, please contact me via The Followers. You can have your Annual returned – providing you exchange it for one of the same year without a dedication, no graffiti, no colouring, no torn or missing pages and price intact – please!

Perhaps this could be the start of a new phase for Followers, re-uniting Annuals with their original owners. Unless the owners have passed on to where some of the characters in the Rupert stories come from – i.e. somewhere in the sky.



Here is my list of Annuals that have dedications underneath



- 1943 To James, from Sheila and Emma, Xmas. (On page 119 the aeroplane has been coloured with purple crayon. Unfortunately the colour on the rudder has permeated the sky, turning it... purple)
- 1944 R. Carter. 57 Hillside Ave. So'ton.
- 1946 To Ann, from Rita and David on her 5th birthday.
- 1947 Mary Gurney. Easter 1950. (Three years late!)
- 1948 Patty Gaswell. 31 New Street, Chipping.
- 1949 Keely Harriott.
- 1951 John Cole, Marlborough. (Neat handwriting, John)
- 1952 Neil Evasion, from Grandad Wilkinson.
- 1953 Neil Evasion, from Grandad Wilkinson. (Again)
- 1956 Tony Gerrard. 76 Christchurch Road.
- 1958 Derek Charles Mullins, from Auntie Mary.
(Rupert's colouring contest on page 106 is badly smudged with paint. Shame on you, Derek)
- 1959 Chris Bankes, 56 York Road. With love from Aunty Jean. (Rupert's colouring contest on page 106 is partially (and neatly) completed, and Chris has carefully written 'age 10'. In the boxes Put a large cross to indicate boy or girl, Chris has marked clearly a large 'X' next to Girl and an even larger cross next to Boy. Chris evidently had a problem...)
- 1960 Vivienne Bulman. (Why has part of page 6 got a large bite, Vivienne? Were you hungry?)
- 1961 Elizabeth Tilson, 68 Owenreach Drive. (All Magic Paintings done, unfortunately)
- 1965 Brian, Christmas 1965. Lots of love from Nan. (Again, all M P's done)
- 1966 Carrie Haynes. (Thank you Carrie for leaving the M P's undone)
- 1969 To Sandra, from Dad. 6th October 1969.
- 1973 David Clifford. (Pity this wasn't an Annual with the brown faced Rupert on the front cover, David. Is that why you plastered Rupert's white face with brown crayon?)

Incidentally, does anyone know how to erase the smell of stale tobacco from second-hand Annuals? One wonders who was the original culprit. A young reader experimenting with his or her first fag?

But wait! I think I know who is to blame. It was *Mr Bear*, smoking his pipe!

Ruth Sear

North West Group

We broke our routine this year and, the afternoon before the clocks moved on, six of us travelled to Shirley Green's house in Blackburn; the Puppeteer was absent, having to wear his 'shopkeeper's hat' that day.

We were all disappointed by the lack of 90th Birthday celebrations in the Daily Express, although your scribe noted that the Sunday Express is now giving the strip a little more room and is printing the images larger and nearer to their original size ratio. In contrast, we were delighted by the 'Special' story reprint with NN 78 and hope (probably in vain) that some of the unrepeated stories could be selected to appear in the Annuals.



*"We'll have a lovely time with Shirley,
So be at Warwick bright and early."*

The Rupert Room had been rearranged, revealing an assortment of items which had not previously been fully visible. Our newest member, 'Guide Pauline' is increasingly amazed at the vast array and we compared notes on our current collecting preferences (something we had not actually done as a group before): needless to say, the

Spring meeting - 26th March 2011

Annuals were number one on the list; the Adventure Series is becoming much more loved and important, too, and most of us like leaflets, flyers and commercial packaging - possibly because they don't 'break the bank'. When space is limited one just has to be selective - and we all have non-Rupert interests as well.

Something else we had not done previously (apart from in general conversation) was to share, in turn, our 'Rupert History'. Although our stories were different, there were common strands; all of us had clear recollection of our first childhood Annuals - either bought for us or passed on; of growing up with Nutwood; of rediscovering Rupert as adults and starting to bring up to date our Annuals collection (or rebuilding our given away 'because you've grown up' one). One of us had never seen the Adventure Series until he was well into Adulthood, and loves them now. We each carry that one special story or image which takes us back instantly to where we were or what we were doing when we first saw it. One of us buys Annuals for her husband, now that the children are grown up, and reads it with him on Christmas morning; as adults we still love the warmth and kindness of the Nutwood Chums, the knowledge that home and tea await and that all will be well after every excursion into the world beyond the immediate village. Is there anyone reading this who does not feel something similar?

Seven hours or so after the First Arrivals, we noticed the time - the Whizz Watch must have been working at full speed - and realised that we should begin to make our farewells. As ever, many thanks, Shirley Eric and Paul, for the hospitality, the regularly filled cups - and the lovely calories.

Between our meeting and your reading this, we will have kept in touch, one way or another, and we are greatly looking forward to the Annual 2011.

Tiger Lily

Conversation Corner: come and meet the North West chums

So - you've come to Warwick, you've done your first round of buying and want to renew your energy for another onslaught on the Bourse, in case you missed anything the first time?

Then get a coffee from the Foyer and come and sit down with the North West Group in our corner of the Hall.

There will be tables and chairs so you can review your purchases and talk about Rupert and collecting generally. Shirley is currently producing a compilation of copies of sections of her vast collection, which may possibly set you off in a new direction; we are continually being surprised when she produces something we have never seen before.

Tell us about your abiding Rupert interests, and you may know something we don't!

CHIT-CHAT

We look forward to meeting you

CHIT-CHAT

Nutwood Postbox

With reference to Margaret Hoyle's excellent article "Golly Gosh" in Nutwood Newsletter 78, and Susan Brown's comments, I too was disappointed to note some important omissions from "Rupert and Chums" featured in Ian Robinson's superb book "The Rupert Companions". I had hoped that this would feature the definitive listings of all Rupert's friends who had shared more than one adventure, but sadly no mention was made of the Girl Guides, Beryl, Pauline and Janet, The Village Postman, brother and sister Brian and Margaret and no illustration of Rollo's Gypsy Granny.

Rod Prescott

I was pleased to see the Rupert Balloon in the Spring Newsletter.

We always went to the Balloon Fiesta at Bristol and the main interest was Rupert!

I thought you may like a photo of it, I'm not sure which year it was. When you see the head come up and the people standing by, it just makes you realize how big he was.

We were disappointed when he wasn't used any more, I understood it was age, maybe not so reliable; I really don't know.



It is a great disappointment to me that we are no longer able enough to go to the Fiesta, we see it on our local TV.

Doreen Russell

Just a minor quibble about Roger Coombes' review of the 2010 Rupert Annual in NN77. Normally it would be correct to say that a 60 frame story represented 30 episodes but *Rupert's Queer Path* is a rare exception.

It actually ran to 45 episodes, the first thirty of these being single picture, the last fifteen being double (the final thirty pictures). As such it is a landmark event in Rupert's history - the story where single picture austerity returned to the double picture affluence of pre-war. How much warning Bestall was given would be interesting to know. Those first fifteen double picture spreads are effectively two episodes side by side with a separate paragraph under each picture, as if they had originally been intended as single picture instalment.

Rupert's Queer Path—30



Double the size—beginning on Monday!

Rupert is beginning to feel exasperated. "How can anyone know what to do in this stupid place?" he cries. "Perhaps if I go crazy, too, I shall get everything right instead of . . ." He breaks off short as he hears a sudden click and a swishing noise, and the next instant a little figure rushes down the chute and lands with a back somersault just as he himself had done. "Why, it's Bill!" shouts Rupert. "You noodle! I told you not to come on the path without your shoes. Now we're both lost!" ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Only with *Rupert and A Mare's Nest** does the prose flow beneath both pictures instead of remaining rigidly under one. If Bestall now had to draw twice the number of pictures at least he only needed to produce the same amount of prose. It was certainly a pleasant surprise for me as an avid follower of six to be presented with a daily double ration of my favourite character.

John Lester

Note: *this appeared as *Rupert and the Mares' Nest* in the 1952 annual – Ed

Send your letters and pictures to
The Editor, Nutwood Newsletter, 29 Mill Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 2RU
or e-mail to RupertSecretary@btinternet.com

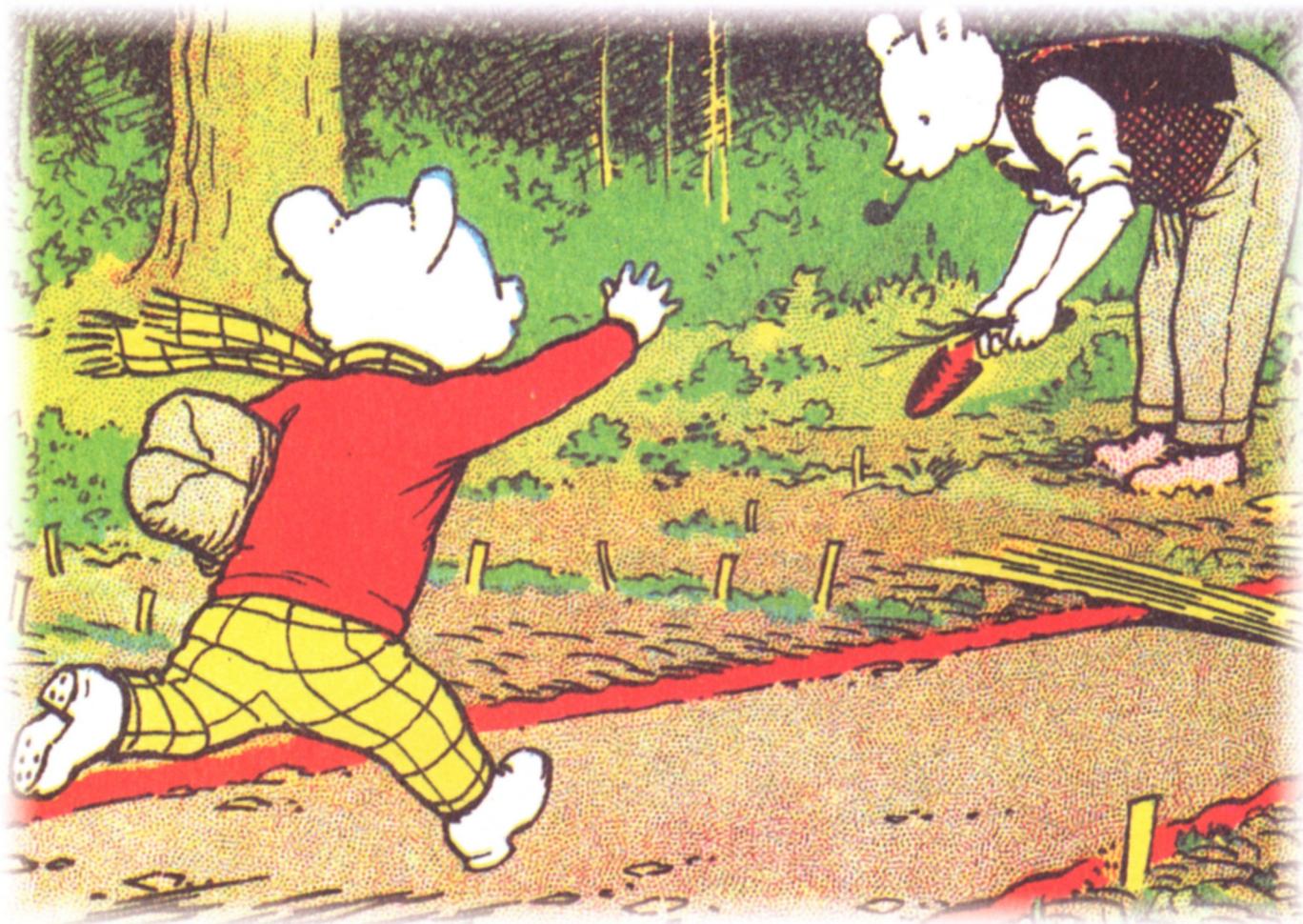


The little bear helps his pal to get up. "Are you all right?" he asks anxiously. "Have you hurt yourself?" "Is that you, Rupert?" whispers Bill shakily. "No, I'm not hurt at all. But where are we? I called to you when you went round that bend in the path, but you didn't answer, so I followed, and when I trod on the last big slab this happened." "You shouldn't have done it," says Rupert, "but I'm jolly glad to have someone else here who is not crazy. Let's try to get out."

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Mon 25 Apr '79

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every day in the Daily Express

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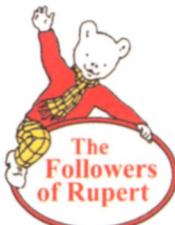
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